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## **MY IDENTITY HAS BEEN STOLEN. WHAT DO I DO NOW?**

1. Contact the fraud departments of the major credit bureaus. Tell them you are an identity theft victim and you want a fraud alert placed on your file. Then, no one will be able to get credit or open a bank account without you knowing about it. Also, ask for a current copy of your credit report.
2. Contact your creditors and let them know you are a victim. These include mortgage holders, credit card companies, telephone and utility companies, banks, etc.
3. Change your passwords and PIN numbers immediately.
4. File a report with your local police department where the theft took place. Get a copy of the report.
5. If the theft of your identity is the result of stolen mail, report it to the U.S. Postal Inspector.
6. If your bank accounts or credit card accounts have been tampered with, close them immediately and open new ones. Establish "password-only" access to the new accounts. If your ATM card is lost or stolen get a new one from the bank and change your PIN immediately.

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7. If the thief is using your phone number, cell phone or calling card, contact the service provider immediately. Cancel the account and open a new one.

8. If the thief is using your Social Security Number, report it to the Social Security Fraud Hotline.

### **RESOURCES**

#### **Credit Bureaus:**

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285  
Experian: 1-888-397-3742  
Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

#### **Arizona Dept. of Motor Vehicles**

Drivers License Fraud Unit:  
602-938-4425

#### **U.S. Dept. of Justice**

Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center  
Box 600  
Rockville, MD 20849-6000  
1-800-627-6872

#### **Federal Trade Commission**

Identity Theft Hotline  
1-877-438-4338

#### **Social Security Fraud Hotline**

1-800-269-0271

#### **U.S. Dept. of Justice**

[www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/)

Federal Trade Commission

[www.consumer.gov/idtheft/](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/)

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## **OFFICE OF VITAL RECORDS**



### **- IDENTITY THEFT -**

## **HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?**

### **I AM A VICTIM, WHAT DO I DO NOW?**

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This brochure is provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services, Office of Vital Records, as an information resource for people who want to protect themselves from identity theft and for people who have become victims of identity theft.

This brochure does not contain all of the information available. It is a starting point to help you find many of the resources and solutions that you will need.



## WHAT IS IDENTITY THEFT?

Identity theft occurs when someone pretends to be you.

Then, pretending to be you, they apply for credit, buy cars, commit crimes, obtain a passport or any number of things that you might or might not do or authorize.

### **Identity Theft is a crime.**

Under Arizona Revised Statutes §13-2708, taking the identity of another person is a felony and can result in imprisonment up to two years and a fine up to \$150,000.00. In addition, the thief can be charged with any other crimes committed while using your identity.

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## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF

Any one of us can become a victim of an identity thief. This is a crime that strikes all economic classes, all sections of the country, and all ages. Identity thieves will even steal the identity of someone who has died. Statistically, Arizona is number one in the nation for reported cases of identity theft.

Here is a list of some of the things you can do to protect your identity and make it more difficult for the thief to steal.

1. Get your Social Security Number out of circulation. Do not allow it to be used as an identification number or drivers license number.
2. Do not give personal information to anyone until you find out how it will be used or whether it will be shared.
3. Guard your mail from theft. Never put outgoing mail in your mailbox. Use a Post Office mailbox. Remove your incoming mail from your mailbox as soon as possible or get a Post Office Box
4. Be careful with passwords and PIN numbers. Don't use the same one for everything. Don't use family names or consecutive numbers such as "1234" or "9999". Change your passwords and PIN numbers from time to time.

5. Only carry the identification and other cards you need. Keep what you do not need in a safe place.

6. Do not give out personal information over the phone, through the mail or over the Internet unless you KNOW with whom you are dealing.

7. Get a shredder, and use it. Shred all trash that contains personal information such as bills or credit card receipts. Shred unwanted credit card offers. Shred old checks and bank statements before you throw them away. Cut up credit cards.

8. Don't leave personal information laying around in your home. Visitors, roommates, or even family could steal the information without you knowing it until it is too late.

9. Do not carry your Social Security Card or birth certificate around with you. You rarely need them. Keep them in a safe place such

10. Obtain a copy of your credit report at least once or twice a year. Check it for errors or possible fraudulent information.

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